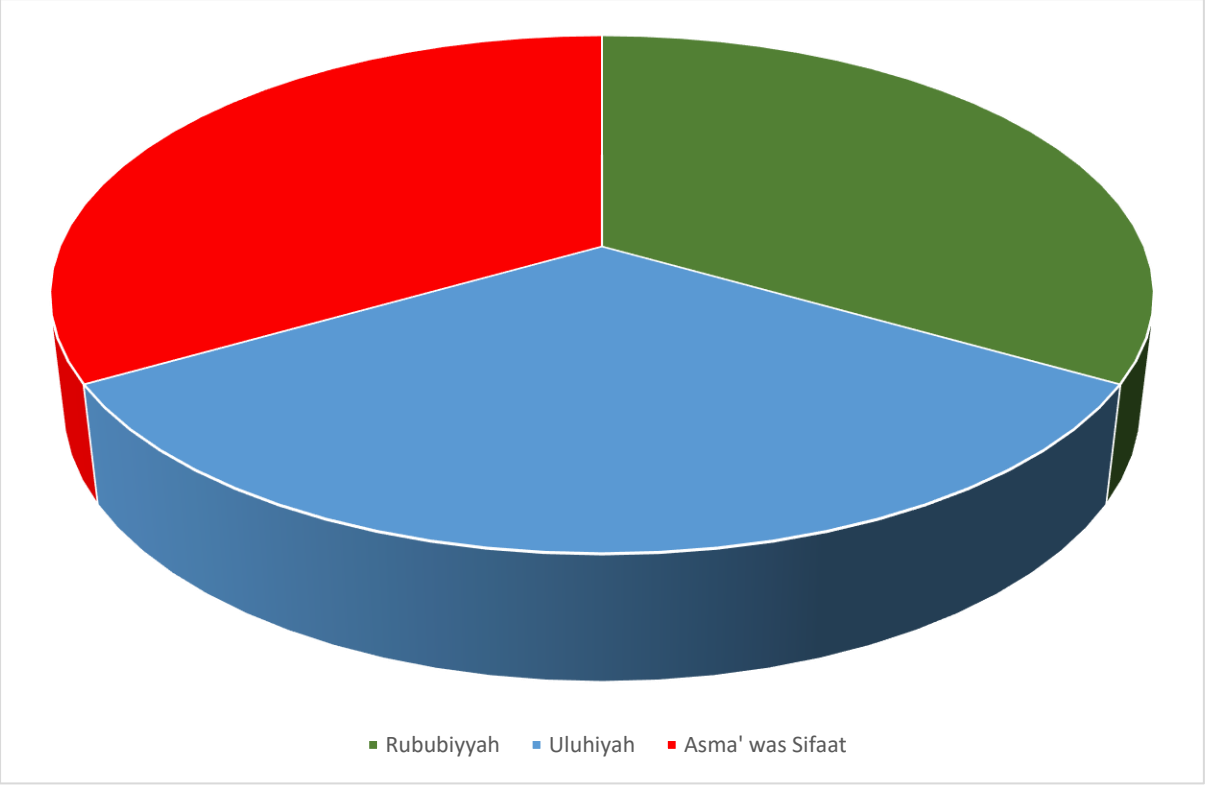
ONE FROM THREE: PARTS OF TAWHID?

WHY IS TAWHID CATEGORIZED AND WHAT ARE ITS PARTS?

صخر الصعلوكي



ONE FROM THREE: PARTS OF TAWHID?

Why is Tawhid categorized and what are its parts?

Case study #1: Iblees (Satan)

An interesting fact about Iblees is that he affirms all the attributes of Allah like Lordship, All knowing, All hearing, All seeing as well as His Oneness (Tawhid) – interestingly, this is same as the belief of a Muslim.

Evidences

Quran [15:36]

قَالَ رَبِّ فَأَنظِرْنِىٓ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ

[Iblees] said, "My Lord, then reprieve me until the Day they are resurrected."

Quran [15:39]

قَالَ رَبِّ بِمَآ أَغْوَيْتَنِى لَأُزَيِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَأُغْوِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ

[Iblees] said, "My Lord, because You have put me in error, I will surely make [disobedience] attractive to them on earth, and I will mislead them all.

Both the verses show Iblees addressing Allah beginning with “my lord”.

Points to ponder

1) What is the difference between belief of a muslim compared to Iblees concerning Allah?
2) A person might claim Iblees’s Islam after noticing these verses, and technically none can reject this notion after these evidences.

In order to analyse this in necessary depth, we must analyse constituents of Tawhid, in other words ‘what does Tawhid comprise of?’

Classical scholars like Ibn Taymiyyah categorized Tawhid into the following types:

1) Tawheed of Rububiyah(Lordship)
2) Tawhid of Uluhiyah(Worship)
3) Tawhid of Asma’ wal Sifaat (Names and attributes)

1) Tawhid of Rububiyyah

Affirming the Oneness of Allah in His Lordship over His Creation. This means to affirm that Allah alone is the Creator, Master and Regulator of all the affairs of the creation.

Evidences

Quran [1:1]

ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ

[All] praise is [due] to Allah, Lord of the worlds - [mankind, jinn and all that exists]

Quran [14:10]

قَالَتْ رُسُلُهُمْ أَفِى ٱللَّهِ شَكٌّ فَاطِرِ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ يَدْعُوكُمْ لِيَغْفِرَ لَكُم مِّن ذُنُوبِكُمْ وَيُؤَخِّرَكُمْ إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ۚ قَالُوٓا۟ إِنْ أَنتُمْ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُنَا تُرِيدُونَ أَن تَصُدُّونَا عَمَّا كَانَ يَعْبُدُ ءَابَآؤُنَا فَأْتُونَا بِسُلْطَٰنٍ مُّبِينٍ

Their messengers said: Can there be doubt concerning Allah, the Creator of the heavens and the earth? He calleth you that He may forgive you your sins and reprieve you unto an appointed term. They said: Ye are but mortals like us, who would fain turn us away from what our fathers used to worship. Then bring some clear warrant.

Remark: Clearly, Iblees affirmed Tawhid of Rububiyyah as seen above.

2) Tawhid of Uluhiyah (Worship)

Having a firm conviction that only Allah is the true God worthy of worship. In Arabic the term 'ibadah' (worship) is associated with obedience, subservience and submission. It is defined as "complete love accompanied by complete submission", which includes holding none intermediary between the person and Allah, i.e.: singling out Allah for worship.

Evidences

Quran [1:4]:

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ

It is You(only) we worship and You(only) we ask for help.

Quran [2:21]:

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ ٱعْبُدُوا۟ رَبَّكُمُ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَكُمْ وَٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

Quran [16:36]:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ ٱلْجِنَّ وَٱلْإِنسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ

And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me.

Quran [72:20]:

قُلْ إِنَّمَآ أَدْعُوا۟ رَبِّى وَلَآ أُشْرِكُ بِهِۦٓ أَحَدًا

Say (O Muhammad): "I invoke only my Lord (Allah Alone), and I associate none as partners along with Him."

Ibn Abbas (رضي الله عنه) said:
اللَّه ذُو الْأُلُوهِيَّة وَالْمَعْبُودِيَّة عَلَى خَلْقه أَجْمَعِينَ

(Allah is the one possessing divinity and the right to be worshiped by the entire creation)
Tafsir At Tabari [1:1]

Ibn Taymiyyah (رحمه الله تعالى) said about Tawhid of Uluhiyah:
"This Tawheed marks the difference between the monotheists and polytheists and punishment in this world and in the hereafter is based upon it. Those who do not believe in it are polytheists".

Thus, not everyone who attests that Allah is lord of everything is a believer in Tawhid when it comes to his deification and His names and attributes. Most people do not deny the Creator, or His lordship over everything, but most of their infidelity(kufr) comes from worship of someone other than Allah. A deity (*ilaah*) in the view of the pagans, is the one who is sought for the sake of these affairs (intercession and nearness to Allah), whether it be an Angel, a Prophet or a grave. They did not intend or mean that a deity (*ilaah*) is the Creator, Sustainer or Regulator (*Mudabbir*), for they knew that this is only for Allah alone.

Conclusion

1. As soon as Tawhid of Uluhiyah comes into play, Iblees gets excommunicated since he rejected worship (Uluhiyah) of Allah.

2. Had there been no types of tawhid specified, we were obliged to confirm Iblees as a Muslim, whom Allah cursed in the Quran -

"And verily, the curse shall be upon you till the Day of Recompense (i.e. the Day of Resurrection)." [15:35]

3) Tawhid of Asma' wal Sifaat (Names and attributes)

This is the means to address Allah ﷻ by the names and attributes which He used to describe Himself in the Quran and the attributes which the Prophet ﷺ used to describe Him ﷻ. His ﷻ essence possesses all the superlative attributes of power, greatness, perfection etc. and is above all defects and deficiencies and He is unique in His names and attributes. We should not deny, distort, explain away, wrongly and falsely interpret His names and attributes. We should believe in them as were revealed.

Examples:

Quran [1:2]:

ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

The Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

Quran [42:4]:

لَهُۥ مَا فِي ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِۖ وَهُوَ ٱلۡعَلِيُّ ٱلۡعَظِيمُ

To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth, and He is the Most High, the Most Great.

Shirk in Asma' wal Sifaat is mostly in cases where people exceed in limits of praise for pious people, or anything else other than Him ﷻ, or keeping names which imply possessing a will which none other than Allah ﷻ possesses. (e.g.: Naming someone 'Rahman' is a shirk in Asma' wal Sifaat (Attributes) as it is the superlative degree of mercy, and when an attribute is superlative, it can't be ascribed to someone other than Allah)

Abu Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) said: The Prophet ﷺ said, "The most disgraceful man in the sight of Allah is a man who calls himself (or likes others to call him) Malikul-Amlak (i.e., king of kings)." [Al-Bukhari and Muslim]

These three aspects of Tawhid are interlinked and overlap. Therefore, whoever fails to fulfill one aspect from them has not completed the requirements of Tawhid, and in many cases may take one out of the fold of Islam.

Case study #2: Pagans of Makkah

The pagans of Makkah believed in the lordship (i.e.: Acknowledged Him as the sole Creator, Sustainer, Provider, All knowing, All powerful, All seeing, All hearing etc.) as well as oneness (Tawhid) of Allah, but Allah called them disbelievers regardless. (Why?)

Evidences

Quran [10:31]:

قُلْ مَن يَرْزُقُكُم مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ أَمَّن يَمْلِكُ ٱلسَّمْعَ وَٱلْأَبْصَٰرَ وَمَن يُخْرِجُ ٱلْحَىَّ مِنَ ٱلْمَيِّتِ وَيُخْرِجُ ٱلْمَيِّتَ مِنَ ٱلْحَىِّ وَمَن يُدَبِّرُ ٱلْأَمْرَ ۚ فَسَيَقُولُونَ ٱللَّهُ ۚ فَقُلْ أَفَلَا تَتَّقُونَ

Say: "Who is it that sustains you (in life) from the sky and from the earth? or who is it that has power over hearing and sight? And who is it that brings out the living from the dead and the dead from the living? and who is it that rules and regulates all affairs?" They will soon say, "Allah". Say, "will ye not then show piety (to Him)?"

Quran [23:84]:

قُل لِّمَنِ ٱلْأَرْضُ وَمَن فِيهَآ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ

Say: "To whom belong the earth and all beings therein? (say) if ye know!"

Quran [23:85]:

سَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّهِ ۚ قُلْ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ

They will say, "To Allah!" say: "Yet will ye not receive admonition?"

Quran [23:86]:

قُلْ مَن رَّبُّ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ ٱلسَّبْعِ وَرَبُّ ٱلْعَرْشِ ٱلْعَظِيمِ

Say: "Who is the Lord of the seven heavens, and the Lord of the Throne (of Glory) Supreme?"

Quran [23:87]:

سَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّهِ ۚ قُلْ أَفَلَا تَتَّقُونَ

They will say, "(They belong) to Allah." Say: "Will ye not then be filled with awe?"

Quran [23:88]:

قُلْ مَنۢ بِيَدِهِۦ مَلَكُوتُ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ وَهُوَ يُجِيرُ وَلَا يُجَارُ عَلَيْهِ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ

Say: "Who is it in whose hands is the governance of all things, - who protects (all), but is not protected (of any)? (say) if ye know."

Quran [23:89]:

سَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّهِ ۚ قُلْ فَأَنَّىٰ تُسْحَرُونَ

They will say, "(It belongs) to Allah." Say: "Then how are ye deluded?"

Quran [39:38]:

وَلَئِن سَأَلْتَهُم مَّنْ خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ لَيَقُولُنَّ ٱللَّهُ ۚ قُلْ أَفَرَءَيْتُم مَّا تَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ إِنْ أَرَادَنِىَ ٱللَّهُ بِضُرٍّ هَلْ هُنَّ كَٰشِفَٰتُ ضُرِّهِۦٓ أَوْ أَرَادَنِى بِرَحْمَةٍ هَلْ هُنَّ مُمْسِكَٰتُ رَحْمَتِهِۦ ۚ قُلْ حَسْبِىَ ٱللَّهُ ۖ عَلَيْهِ يَتَوَكَّلُ ٱلْمُتَوَكِّلُونَ

And verily, if thou shouldst ask them: Who created the heavens and the earth? they will say: Allah. Say: Bethink you then of those ye worship beside Allah, if Allah willed some hurt for me, could they remove from me His hurt; or if He willed some mercy for me, could they restrain His mercy? Say: Allah is my all. In Him do (all) the trusting put their trust.

Points to Ponder:

1. Why did Allah call them disbelievers?

2. Why did Allah send a messenger among them when they already affirmed all His attributes in the superlative degree and affirmed His oneness and even worshipped Him?

The answer to both the questions is their innovated practises of “seeking nearness(*taqarrub*)” and “seeking intercession(*shafaa’a*)” from prophets, angels, as well as pious predecessors, which involved calling on to them and making *Dua* to them.

Evidences:

Allah said in [10:18]:

وَيَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا يَضُرُّهُمْ وَلَا يَنفَعُهُمْ وَيَقُولُونَ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ شُفَعَٰٓؤُنَا عِندَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ قُلْ أَتُنَبِّـُٔونَ ٱللَّهَ بِمَا لَا يَعْلَمُ فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَلَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ سُبْحَٰنَهُۥ وَتَعَٰلَىٰ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ

They worship beside Allah that which neither hurteth them nor profiteth them, and they say: These are our intercessors with Allah. Say: Would ye inform Allah of (something) that He knoweth not in the heavens or in the earth? Praised be He and High Exalted above all that ye associate (with Him)!

And He said in [39:43]:

أَمِ ٱتَّخَذُوا۟ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ شُفَعَآءَ ۚ قُلْ أَوَلَوْ كَانُوا۟ لَا يَمْلِكُونَ شَيْـًٔا وَلَا يَعْقِلُونَ

Or choose they intercessors other than Allah? Say: What! Even though they have power over nothing and have no intelligence?

And He said in [39:44]:

قُل لِّلَّهِ ٱلشَّفَٰعَةُ جَمِيعًا ۖ لَّهُۥ مُلْكُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ ثُمَّ إِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ

Say: Unto Allah belongeth all intercession. His is the Sovereignty of the heavens and the earth. And afterward unto Him ye will be brought back.

In a nutshell, those pagans acknowledged Allah as the sole creator, protector, sustainer, lord etc. (i.e.: accepted His Rububiyyah/Lordship) but refused to single out Allah in “worship” (i.e.: denied his Uluhiyyah). However Allah declared them disbelievers because of rejecting this part of Tawhid.

And He said in [39:45]:

وَإِذَا ذُكِرَ ٱللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ ٱشْمَأَزَّتْ قُلُوبُ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱلْءَاخِرَةِ ۖ وَإِذَا ذُكِرَ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن دُونِهِۦٓ إِذَا هُمْ يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ

And when Allah alone is mentioned, the hearts of those who believe not in the Hereafter are repelled, and when those (whom they worship) beside Him are mentioned, behold! they are glad.

And He said in [39:3]:

أَلَا لِلَّهِ ٱلدِّينُ ٱلْخَالِصُ ۚ وَٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّخَذُوا۟ مِن دُونِهِۦٓ أَوْلِيَآءَ مَا نَعْبُدُهُمْ إِلَّا لِيُقَرِّبُونَآ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ زُلْفَىٰٓ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَهُمْ فِى مَا هُمْ فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِى مَنْ هُوَ كَٰذِبٌ كَفَّارٌ

Is it not to Allah that sincere devotion is due? But those who take for protectors other than Allah (say): "We only serve them in order that they may bring us nearer to Allah." Truly Allah will judge between them in that wherein they differ. But Allah guides not such as are false and ungrateful.

Ibn Taymiyyah (رحمه الله تعالى) said:

'Indeed the Messengers were not sent save for the purpose of (teaching) *Tawhid Al-Uluhiyyah* which means to single out Allah (alone) for worship; as for (the other,) *Tawhid Ar-Rububiyyah*, which is to believe that Allah is the Lord of all existence and disposer of their affairs, none has disagreed with this, Muslim or polytheist, the proof for which is the Almighty's statement "**And if you were to ask them who fashioned the heavens and the earth they would reply Allah**" (39:38)'

The Arabs (of *jahiliyyah*) rejected the belief of the *Rububiyyah* of statues, Angels and the Messiah but they did not become disbelievers because of disbelieving in the *Rububiyyah* of these statues, rather by abandoning *Tawhid Al-Uluhiyyah* by worshipping them – and this is the same for those who perpetually visit graves, seek means through the pious, call upon them, and seek their assistance, seeking from them that which Allah has not given them the ability to do.

Conclusion:

1. Had there been no Tawheed of Uluhiyah, the pagans of mecca would have been muslim and equal in faith as the Ummah of the beloved Prophet
2. There would have been no purpose of sending a Prophet among them

Sidenote:

The pagans of our times also hold the Prophet ﷺ, some of his companions and many from the late pious scholars as their 'intercessors'; regardless, their claim remains same as of the pagans of Mecca (see 10:18). At this point, a person might argue that they don't 'worship' them, rather they just ask them to convey their message/Dua to Him when they have to. Allah has refuted them already in the following verses -

He said in [10:18]:

قُلْ أَتُنَبِّـُٔونَ ٱللَّهَ بِمَا لَا يَعْلَمُ فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَلَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ سُبْحَٰنَهُۥ وَتَعَٰلَىٰ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ...

... Say: Would ye inform Allah of (something) that He knoweth not in the heavens or in the earth? Praised be He and High Exalted above all that ye associate (with Him)!

And He said in [35:14]:

إِن تَدْعُوهُمْ لَا يَسْمَعُوا۟ دُعَآءَكُمْ وَلَوْ سَمِعُوا۟ مَا ٱسْتَجَابُوا۟ لَكُمْ ۖ وَيَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ يَكْفُرُونَ بِشِرْكِكُمْ ۚ وَلَا يُنَبِّئُكَ مِثْلُ خَبِيرٍ

If ye pray unto them they hear not your prayer, and if they heard they could not grant it you. On the Day of Resurrection they will disown association with you. None can inform you like Him Who is Aware.

And this Hadith of the beloved Prophet ﷺ -

Al-Nu'man ibn Bashir reported: The Prophet ﷺ said: "Supplication is the essence of worship." Then, the Prophet recited the verse, "Your Lord says: Call upon Me and I will respond to you. Verily, those who disdain My worship will enter Hell in humiliation." (40:60) [Sunan al-Tirmidhī 3247, Sahih (authentic) according to Al-Albani]

And Allah knows best